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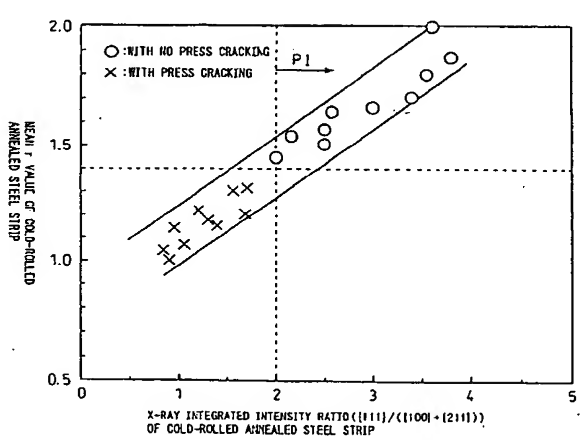
(54) **Cr-CONTAINING HEAT-RESISTANT STEEL SHEET EXCELLENT IN WORKABILITY AND METHOD FOR PRODUCTION THEREOF**

(57) A Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0% and, as required, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%, and/or one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100%, and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, and having an x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of 2 or greater in the central region of thickness.

Fig.1



EP 1 571 227 A1

Description

[Technical Field]

[0001] This invention relates to a Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel with an excellent workability which is optimum for a material for an automotive exhaust system requiring high-temperature strength and oxidation resistance.

[Background Art]

[0002] Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheets are used for exhaust manifolds, mufflers and other exhaust system members that require high-temperature strength and oxidation resistance. As these members are manufactured by press-forming, the steel sheets are required to have press formability.

[0003] Meanwhile, the service temperature for these members rises year after year. To cope with this temperature rise, it is now required to enhance the high-temperature strength of the material steel sheets by increasing the addition of Cr, Mo, Nb and other alloying elements.

[0004] The addition of alloying elements by simple manufacturing methods, however, has sometimes lowered the workability of material steel sheets to such a level as to make press forming impossible.

[0005] Increasing the cold reduction ratio is conducive to effectively increasing the "r" value that is an index of press formability of steel sheets. However, the material steel sheets for said exhaust system members are relatively thick (between approximately 1.5 mm and 2 mm). Therefore, the conventional manufacturing processes that limit the thickness of cold-rolled strip to within a certain range do not permit securing sufficient cold reduction ratios.

[0006] In order to solve the above problem by increasing the "r" value, which is an index of press formability, without impairing the high-temperature properties, various studies have been made regarding the chemical composition and manufacturing method of steel sheets.

[0007] Conventionally, the workability of Cr-bearing heat-resistant steels has been improved by adjusting the chemical composition as disclosed in, for example, Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication (Kokai) No. 09-279312. However, composition adjustment alone is not enough to solve the problems, such as cracks caused by pressing, in thicker materials manufactured with relatively low reduction ratios.

[0008] Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication (Kokai) No. 2002-30346 discloses a method that specifies the optimum hot-rolled strip annealing temperature based on the relationship between the hot-rolling starting and finishing temperatures, Nb content and annealing temperature. However, specifying the hot-rolled strip annealing temperature alone is sometimes not enough where there are effects of elements (C, N, Cr, Mo, etc.) that are related to Nb-bearing precipitates.

[0009] Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication (Kokai) No. 08-199235 discloses a method that applies aging treatment to hot-rolled steel strip for more than one hour. This method, however, has a drawback that commercial manufacturing efficiency is extremely low.

[Summary of the Invention]

[0010] The object of this invention is to provide a Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet having workability and a method of manufacturing the same by solving problems in conventional technologies.

[0011] In order to solve the problems described above, the inventors made detailed studies of chemical compositions, structures of steel during manufacturing process and precipitates in the structure in relation to the workability of Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet.

[0012] The gist of the present invention that solves the above-described problems is as follows:

(1) A Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, and having an x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of 2 or greater in the central region of thickness.

(2) A Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability described in (1), which contains, in mass%, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%.

(3) A Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability described in (1) or (2), which contains, in mass%, one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100% and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%.

(4) A method for manufacturing Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising of the steps of:

hot-rolling a steel comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0% and, as required, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%, and/or, one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100%, and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, with a heating temperature of 1000°C to 1150°C and a finishing temperature of 600°C to 800°C,
coiling the hot-rolled strip at not higher than 500°C,
heating the coiled hot-rolled strip at between 900°C and 1000°C, and
cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec or faster, with subsequent pickling, cooling and annealing.

(5) A method for manufacturing Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising of the steps of:

hot-rolling a steel comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0% and, as required, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%, and/or, one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100% and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, with a heating temperature of 1000°C to 1150°C and a finishing temperature of 600°C to 800°C,
coiling the hot-rolled strip at not higher than 500°C,
recrystallizing the coiled hot-rolled strip,
holding the strip at 900°C to 1000°C for not less than 60 seconds, and
cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec or faster, with subsequent pickling, cooling and annealing.

(6) A method for manufacturing Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising of the steps of:

hot-rolling a steel comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0% and, as required, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%, and/or one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100% and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, with a heating temperature of 1000°C to 1150°C and a finishing temperature of 600°C to 800°C,
coiling the hot-rolled strip at not higher than 500°C,
holding the coiled hot-rolled strip at 750°C to 950°C for 1 hour to 30 hours, and
cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec or faster, with subsequent pickling, cooling and annealing.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[0013]

Fig. 1 shows the relationship between the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) and "r" value of manufactured steel sheets.
Fig. 2 shows the relationship between the slab heating temperature and the "r" value of manufactured strip.
Fig. 3 shows the relationship between the annealing condition of hot-rolled strip and the "r" value of manufactured strip.
Fig. 4 shows the relationship between the annealing condition of hot-rolled strip and the "r" value of manufactured strip.

[The Most Preferred Embodiment]

[0014] Details of the invention are described below.
[0015] To begin with, the reason why this invention limits the chemical composition is explained below. "%" used in the description means "mass%".
[0016] C deteriorates workability and corrosion resistance. Therefore, the smaller the content, the better. This is the reason why the upper limit of the content of C is set at 0.010%. The lower limit is set at 0.001% because excessive reduction brings about a refining cost increase. When considering manufacturing cost and corrosion resistance, it is preferable to limit the carbon content to between 0.002 and 0.005%.

[0017] Si, which is sometimes added as a deoxidizing element, is also a solid solution strengthening element. From the viewpoint of material properties, therefore, the smaller the content, the better. Thus, the upper limit is set at 0.60%. To secure good resistance to oxidation, the lower limit is set at 0.01%. However, the preferable lower limit is 0.30% because excessive reduction brings about a refining cost increase. When considering material properties, the preferable upper limit is 0.50%.

[0018] Mn, like Si, is a solid solution strengthening element. From the viewpoint of material properties, therefore, the smaller the content, the better. So, the upper limit is set at 0.60%, whereas the lower limit is set at 0.05% in order to secure good scale adhesion. However, the preferable lower limit is 0.30% because excessive reduction leads to a refining cost increase. When considering material properties, the preferable upper limit is 0.50%.

[0019] P, like Mn and Si, is a solid solution strengthening element. From the viewpoint of material properties, therefore, the smaller the content, the better. Therefore, the upper limit is set at 0.04%. The lower limit is set at 0.01% because excessive reduction brings about a refining cost increase. When considering manufacturing cost and corrosion resistance, the preferable content is between 0.02% and 0.03%.

[0020] From the viewpoint of material properties and corrosion resistance, the smaller the content of S, the better. So the upper limit is set at 0.0100%, whereas the lower limit is set at 0.0005% because excessive reduction brings about a refining cost increase. When considering manufacturing cost and corrosion resistance, the preferable content is between 0.0020% and 0.0060%.

[0021] It is necessary to add Cr of not less than 14% for the improvement of corrosion and oxidation resistance. However, addition in excess of 19% deteriorates toughness, manufacturability and material properties in general. So, Cr content is limited between 14% and 19%. The preferable content to secure good corrosion resistance and high-temperature strength is 14% to 18%.

[0022] As N, like C, deteriorates workability and corrosion resistance, the smaller the content, the better. Therefore, the upper limit is set at 0.020%. The lower limit is set at 0.001% because excessive reduction brings about a refining cost increase. When considering manufacturing cost, workability and corrosion resistance, the preferable content is 0.004% to 0.010%.

[0023] From the viewpoint of solid-solution and precipitation strengthening, Nb is necessary for the improvement of high-temperature strength. Nb fixes C and N as carbonitrides and affects the development of recrystallized aggregate structure, that is, x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of manufactured strip. As the above-described action of Nb appears when the content is not less than 0.3%, the lower limit is set at 0.3%.

[0024] As this invention improves workability by controlling Nb-precipitates (in particular, the Laves phase that comprises intermetallic compounds consisting essentially of Fe, Cr, Nb and Mo) before cold-rolling, there must be a sufficient quantity of Nb to fix C and N. As, however, the effect saturates at 1.0%, the upper limit is set at 1.0%. When considering manufacturing cost and manufacturability, the preferable content is 0.4% to 0.7%.

[0025] Mo is required by heat-resistant steels as an element for increasing corrosion resistance and controlling high-temperature oxidation. Mo also forms Laves phase. To improve workability by controlling the formation of Laves phase, Mo of not less than 0.5% is required.

[0026] If Mo content is lower than 0.5%, the Laves phase required for developing the recrystallized aggregate structure does not precipitate and, as a result, does not increase the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of manufactured steel sheets. Therefore, the lower limit of Mo content is set at 0.5%.

[0027] As, however, excessive addition deteriorates toughness and lowers elongation properties, the upper limit is set at 2.0%. When considering manufacturing cost and manufacturability, the preferable content is 1.0% to 1.5%.

[0028] Cu is added as required for increasing corrosion resistance and high-temperature strength. Addition of Cu of not less than 0.5% precipitates ε-Cu and, thereby, increases the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}). Therefore, the lower limit is set at 0.5%.

[0029] As, however, excessive addition lowers elongation properties and deteriorates manufacturability, the upper limit is set at 3.0%. When considering manufacturing cost and manufacturability, the preferable content is 1.0% to 2.0%.

[0030] W is added as required for increasing high-temperature strength. As this action appears when W of not less than 0.01% is added, the lower limit is set at 0.01%. As, however, excessive addition lowers manufacturability and workability, the upper limit is set at 1.0%. When considering high-temperature properties and manufacturing cost, the preferable content is 0.05% to 0.5%.

[0031] Sn is added as required for increasing high-temperature strength and lowers recrystallization temperature by segregating at grain boundaries. As this action appears when Sn of not less than 0.01% is added, the lower limit is set at 0.01%. As, however, excessive addition deteriorates workability and tends to form surface defects during manufacturing, the upper limit is set at 1.00%. When considering high-temperature properties and manufacturing cost, the preferable content is 0.05% to 0.50%.

[0032] Ti is added as required for further improving corrosion resistance, intergranular corrosion resistance and deep drawability by combining with C, N and S. As the action to increase the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) appears when the content is not lower than 0.01%, the lower limit is set at 0.01%.

[0033] A combined addition of Ti and Nb improves high-temperature strength and contributes to the improvement of oxidation resistance. However, excessive addition impairs manufacturability in the steelmaking process, induces defect formation in the cold-rolling process and brings about deterioration of material properties by increasing solid solution of Ti. Therefore, the upper limit is set at 0.20%. When considering manufacturing cost, the preferable content is 0.03% to 0.10%.

[0034] Al is sometimes added as a deoxidizing element. As the deoxidizing action appears when the content is not less than 0.005%, the lower limit is set at 0.005%. As addition in excess of 0.100% lowers elongation properties and deteriorates weldability and surface quality, the upper limit is set at 0.100%. When considering a refining cost, the preferable content is 0.010% to 0.070%.

[0035] Mg forms Mg-oxide in molten steel and acts as a deoxidizing agent together with Al. Fine precipitation of Nb- or Ti-precipitates occurs around finely crystallized Mg-oxide. When these precipitates finely precipitate in the hot-rolling process, very fine recrystallized structures are formed around the fine precipitates, thereby increasing the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) and remarkably improving the workability of cold-rolled annealed steel sheets. As this action appears when the content is not lower than 0.0002%, the lower limit is set at 0.0002%.

[0036] As, however, excessive addition lowers weldability, the upper limit is set at 0.0100%. When considering refining cost, the preferable content is 0.0005% to 0.0020%.

[0037] B of not less than 0.0003% is added for improving cold workability and fabricability of manufactured steel sheets. However, addition in excess of 0.001% deteriorates ductility and deep drawability. Therefore, the upper limit is set at 0.001%. The preferable content is 0.0005% to 0.0010%.

[0038] Next, the relationship between the x-ray intensity ratio and "r" value will be discussed below.

[0039] It is common knowledge that the "r" value, which is an indicator of workability, is related to the recrystallized aggregate structure. Generally, the "r" value improves if the ratio of plane direction {111} to {100}, i.e. ({111}/{100}), is increased. Through an investigation that takes into consideration of the influences of other plane directions as well, the inventors discovered that plane direction {211} too should be considered for the improvement of the "r" value.

[0040] Now this invention is described by reference to the accompanying drawings.

[0041] Fig. 1 shows the relationship between the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) and mean "r" value in the central region of thickness of cold-rolled annealed Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet (containing C of 0.003%, Si of 0.5%, Mg of 0.5%, P of 0.02%, S of 0.001%, Cr of 14.5%, Nb of 0.6%, Mo of 1.4% and N of 0.01%) that affects cracking during pressing.

[0042] Here, the x-ray intensity ratio plotted along the horizontal axis was derived from the x-ray intensity strength measured on different crystal faces in the central region of thickness of cold-rolled annealed steel sheet and the intensity ratio of non-oriented steel specimens.

[0043] The mean "r" value plotted along the vertical axis was derived by applying 15% in the rolling direction and directions 45° and 90° away therefrom on JIS 13B tensile test specimens taken from cold-rolled annealed steel sheet and using equations (1) and (2).

$$r = 1n(W_0/W)/1n(t_0/t) \tag{1}$$

where W_0 is the sheet width before application of strain, W is the sheet width after application of strain, t_0 is the sheet thickness before application of strain, and t is the sheet thickness after application of strain.

$$\text{Mean r value} = (r_0 + 2r_{45} + r_{90})/4 \tag{2}$$

where r_0 is the "r" value in the rolling direction, r_{45} is the "r" value in a direction 45 degrees away from the rolling direction, and r_{90} is the "r" value in a direction 90 degrees away from the rolling direction.

[0044] As can be seen from Fig. 1, the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) and "r" value are in a proportional relationship and, therefore, the "r" value improves as the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) increases. When the x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) is 2 or above (in the range PI in the figure), the mean "r" value is 1.4 or above, which means that workability is high enough to permit fabrication of general exhaust system members.

[0045] The inventors also studied a manufacturing method, in addition to the chemical composition and the x-ray intensity ratio. Study of the influences of hot-rolling and annealing conditions led to a discovery that controlling the formation of Nb-based precipitates improves the "r" value.

[0046] Fig. 2 shows the influences of heating and finishing-rolling temperatures on the "r" value of Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet (containing C of 0.003%, Si of 0.5%, Mn of 0.5%, P of 0.02%, S of 0.001%, Cr of 14.5%, Nb of 0.6%, Mo of 1.4% and N of 0.01%) prepared by hot-rolling to a thickness of 5.0 mm with a coiling temperature of 500°C

and annealing temperature of 950°C and cold-rolling to a thickness of 1.5 mm with an annealing temperature of 1050°C.

[0047] In Fig. 2 the circled numbers designate the mean "r" values. As can be seen from Fig. 2, "r" values 1.4 or above can be obtained by heating at 1000°C to 1150°C and finishing-rolling at 600°C to 800°C. (See the hatched area in the figure.)

[0048] If the temperatures are outside the range specified by the present invention, appropriate precipitates are unobtainable in the manufacturing process. As a consequence, the x-ray intensity ratio of cold-rolled steel strip is out of the preferable range and the preferable "r" value cannot be obtained.

[0049] If the heating temperature is under 1000°C and/or the finishing-rolling temperature is under 600°C (see the area indicated by arrow in the figure), many surface defects due to seizure with hot-rolling rolls are formed. Such surface defects significantly deteriorate the surface quality and become the starting point of cracking during pressing. Therefore, the lower limits of the heating and finishing-rolling temperatures are respectively set at 1000°C and 600°C.

[0050] The reason why the present invention improves the "r" value is that fine recrystallization is achieved by implementing hot-rolling at low temperature, increasing stored strain and accelerating recrystallization in the subsequent annealing process. With the chemical composition according to this invention, Nb-based precipitates precipitate at 1200°C or below. During hot-rolling, therefore, a working strain is introduced around the finely precipitated Nb-based precipitates in the mother phase.

[0051] In order to accumulate strain in hot-rolling, it is necessary to increase stored strain by coiling the finish-rolled strip at low temperature. Therefore coiling at low temperature is preferable. As stored strain does not recover if the coiling temperature is not higher than 500°C, the coiling temperature is set at not higher than 500°C. As, however, an excessively low temperature leads to malformed strip, the preferable temperature is 400°C to 500°C.

[0052] Hot-rolled steel strip is generally annealed for securing desired properties by recrystallizing the ferrite structure. The basic metallurgical principle for improving the "r" value is to refine the ferrite structure in hot-rolled annealed steel before cold-rolling, facilitate the introduction of strain from grain boundaries, and develop the crystal orientation (such as {111}<112>) that improves the "r" value during annealing of cold-rolled steel sheet.

[0053] However, the present inventors discovered a method to improve the "r" value by controlling the quantity and size of Nb-based precipitates, even without forming recrystallized structure by annealing hot-rolled steel strip.

[0054] Fig. 3 shows the relationship between the annealing temperature of hot-rolled steel strip and the mean "r" value of cold-rolled annealed steel strip prepared by annealing hot-rolled strip of Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel strip (containing C of 0.003%, Si of 0.5%, Mg of 0.5%, P of 0.02%, S of 0.001%, Cr of 14.5%, Nb of 0.6%, Mo of 1.4% and N of 0.01%) and cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec, with a slab heating temperature of 1150°C, a coiling temperature of 500°C, hot-rolled strip thickness of 5.0 mm, cold-rolled strip thickness of 1.5 mm and cold-rolled strip annealing temperature of 1050°C.

[0055] Fig. 3 shows that the "r" value of the cold-rolled annealed steel strip becomes 1.4 or higher (see the range PI in the figure) by heating the hot-rolled strip to between 900°C and 1000°C and cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec.

[0056] Though the structure of the hot-rolled steel strip is not recrystallized in the temperature range between 900°C and 1000°C as the recrystallizing temperature thereof is 1050°C (see "Tre" in the figure), the mean "r" value is high. This is because, among the Nb-based precipitates (Nb(C,N) and the Laves phase), the Laves phase, in particular, precipitates in large enough quantity and size to accelerate recrystallization in the subsequent cold-rolled strip annealing process.

[0057] If the temperatures are outside the range specified by the present invention (the range PI in the figure), appropriate precipitates are unobtainable in the manufacturing process. As a consequence, the x-ray intensity ratio of cold-rolled steel strip is outside the preferable range and the preferable "r" value cannot be obtained.

[0058] If the hot-rolled steel strip is annealed at a temperature higher than 1000°C, much of the Nb-based precipitates becomes a solid solution and re-precipitates when the cold-rolled strip is annealed, thereby significantly delaying the recrystallization of the ferrite phase and impeding the growth of the recrystallization orientation that increases the "r" value.

[0059] If the hot-rolled strip is annealed at a temperature under 900°C, a large quantity of fine Laves phase not larger than 0.1 μm precipitates. In the subsequent annealing of the cold-rolled steel strip, the fine Laves phase acts as a pin to inhibit recrystallization and significantly delays the recrystallization of the ferrite phase.

[0060] In order to prevent the precipitation of the fine Laves phase during cooling, the faster the cooling rate, the better. The preferable cooling rate is 30°C/sec or faster.

[0061] The recrystallizing temperature of the hot-rolled steel strip varies with the alloy composition. Depending on other properties, it is sometimes necessary to recrystallize the hot-rolled steel strip. The inventors discovered that heating to and holding between 900°C and 1000°C is effective because heat treatment is done at a temperature not lower than the recrystallizing temperature and the Laves phase described earlier is controlled subsequently.

[0062] Fig. 4 shows the relationship between the holding time of hot-rolled strip annealing temperature and the mean "r" value of cold-rolled annealed steel strip prepared by annealing a hot-rolled strip of Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel (containing C of 0.003%, Si of 0.5%, Mn of 0.5%, P of 0.02%, S of 0.001%, Cr of 14.5%, Nb of 0.6%, Mo of 1.4% and

N of 0.01%) and cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec, with a slab heating temperature of 1150°C, coiling temperature of 500°C, hot-rolled strip thickness of 5.0 mm, hot-rolled strip heating temperature of 1100°C, cold-rolled strip thickness of 1.5 mm and cold-rolled strip annealing temperature of 1050°C.

[0063] As can be seen from Fig. 4, the mean "r" value of not lower than 1.4 is obtained if the strip is heated to a temperature range between 900°C and 1000°C and held in the same range for not shorter than 60 seconds. If the temperatures are outside the range specified by the present invention (the range PI in the figure), appropriate precipitates are unobtainable in the manufacturing process. As a consequence, the x-ray intensity ratio of cold-rolled steel strip is outside the preferable range and the preferable "r" value cannot be obtained.

[0064] Hot-rolled steel strip can be heated to a temperature not lower than the recrystallizing temperature either by continuous annealing that heat treats steel strip continuously or by batch annealing which requires long time. Heating to the temperature range between 900°C and 1000°C can be accomplished either by first heating to the recrystallizing temperature and then reheating after cooling to room temperature or by holding in the cooling process after heating to the recrystallizing temperature. In all these cases, the cooling rate to 300°C should be not slower than 30°C/sec for the reason described earlier.

[0065] In order to control the quantity and size of Nb-based precipitates, hot-rolled steel strip can be heat-treated over a long period of time, as described earlier. Particularly if strip is held between 750°C and 950°C for 1 hour to 30 hours, Nb-precipitates are formed in an appropriate way to contribute to the improvement of workability. Heat treatment can be applied either by batch annealing or by holding the heat during coiling of hot-rolled strip. In view of the production efficiency, the preferable heat treatment temperature is 800°C to 900°C.

[0066] Next, examples of the present invention are described. The conditions used in the examples are those which were used to demonstrate the practicability and effect of the present invention which is by no means limited thereto. The present invention can be put into practice under various conditions without departing from the spirit and purpose thereof.

[Example]

[0067] Steels of chemical compositions listed in Tables 1 and 2 were cast to slab that was then hot-rolled to 5.0 mm thick strip. The hot-rolled strip was then continuously annealed, pickled, cold-rolled to a thickness of 1.5 mm, and then made into finished product by applying continuous annealing and pickling. Tables 3 and 4 shows the manufacturing conditions employed.

[0068] Specimens were taken from the finished product described above and the x-ray intensity, "r" value and elongation in the central region of thickness were measured. The x-ray intensity and "r" value were measured by the same method as described earlier.

[0069] Elongation at break was determined by taking JIS 13B tensile test specimens from the finished-strip and applying tensile force in the rolling direction. If the elongation is under 30%, the finished-strip does not withstand stretch forming even if the "r" value is high. Therefore, elongation must not be less than 30%.

Table 1

	Steel No.	C	Si	Mn	P	S	Cr	N	Nb	Mo	Cu	W	Sn	Ti	Al	Mg	B	X-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of finished strip	Mean "r" value of finished strip	Elongation of finished strip, %
Inventive examples	1	0.005	0.53	0.55	0.03	0.0008	13.9	0.009	0.61	1.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.0	1.5	35
	2	0.003	0.08	0.07	0.01	0.0001	14.5	0.005	0.58	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.5	1.4	32
	3	0.004	0.11	0.13	0.01	0.0012	18.8	0.005	0.77	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.6	1.5	31
	4	0.003	0.08	0.07	0.01	0.0001	14.5	0.005	0.83	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.0	1.6	34
	5	0.003	0.49	0.52	0.02	0.0011	14.0	0.009	0.55	1.3	2.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.0	1.8	32
	6	0.006	0.23	0.45	0.01	0.0015	18.5	0.004	0.63	1.5	1.5	0.14	-	-	-	-	-	4.2	1.8	31
	7	0.008	0.58	0.56	0.04	0.0033	14.1	0.002	0.90	0.5	-	-	0.05	-	-	-	-	4.1	1.8	33
	8	0.007	0.45	0.31	0.02	0.0023	16.8	0.006	0.53	0.6	0.8	-	0.08	-	-	-	-	3.8	1.7	33
	9	0.008	0.50	0.50	0.01	0.0016	14.3	0.001	0.66	1.1	0.6	0.09	-	-	-	-	-	2.8	1.5	32
	10	0.009	0.07	0.09	0.01	0.0010	15.5	0.015	0.35	2.9	-	0.70	0.70	-	-	-	-	2.9	1.6	31
	11	0.002	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.0007	14.6	0.016	0.33	0.6	-	-	-	0.11	-	-	0.0005	3.3	1.7	36
	12	0.007	0.58	0.33	0.01	0.0053	15.8	0.011	0.45	0.7	-	-	-		0.010		-	4.1	1.8	35
	13	0.004	0.35	0.25	0.01	0.0025	16.3	0.008	0.56	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	0.0002	-	4.5	1.9	38
	14	0.005	0.26	0.41	0.01	0.0013	17.8	0.013	0.68	1.6	-	-	-	0.03	0.07		0.0003	2.5	1.5	35
	15	0.006	0.15	0.11	0.02	0.0021	18.6	0.005	0.77	1.9	-	-	-	0.18	-	0.0011	-	2.4	1.4	36
	16	0.009	0.06	0.09	0.01	0.0015	18.3	0.003	0.81	1.4	-	-	-		0.006	0.0005	-	3.9	1.7	35
	17	0.006	0.38	0.45	0.04	0.0009	17.1	0.004	0.93	1.2	0.7	-	-	0.02	-	-	0.0010	4.5	1.8	35
	18	0.003	0.21	0.55	0.02	0.0011	16.2	0.001	0.83	1.1	2.8	-	-	0.17	0.006	-	0.0008	3.3	1.6	34
	19	0.003	0.13	0.22	0.01	0.0019	15.4	0.013	0.74	0.7	-	-	-	0.03	-	0.0002	0.0005	3.2	1.6	35
	20	0.003	0.12	0.39	0.01	0.0038	14.2	0.018	0.61	0.6	-	0.05	0.12	0.15	-	-	0.0004	2.5	1.5	32
	21	0.003	0.02	0.1	0.02	0.001	16.1	0.011	0.47	1.7	-	-	-	0.15	0.013	0.0002	0.0008	3.0	1.5	35
	22	0.004	0.11	0.16	0.03	0.0041	14.1	0.004	0.55	0.5	1.4	-	-	0.09	-	0.0050	0.0009	3.1	1.6	34

Table 2

	Steel No.	C	Si	Mn	P	S	Cr	N	Nb	Mo	Cu	W	Sn	Ti	Al	Mg	B	X-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of finished strip	Mean "r" value of finished strip	Elongation of finished strip, %
Inventive examples	23	0.005	0.53	0.55	0.03	0.0008	13.9	0.009	0.61	1.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.7*	1.2*	27*
	24	0.006	0.8*	0.35	0.02	0.0009	14.3	0.001	0.60	1.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.5	1.4	28*
	25	0.007	0.42	1.2*	0.02	0.0012	14.5	0.001	0.59	1.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.5	1.3	27*
	26	0.003	0.55	0.07	0.01	0.0001	14.5	0.005	0.58	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5*	1*	32
	27	0.004	0.11	0.60	0.01	0.0012	18.8	0.005	0.77	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1*	0.9*	33
	28	0.003	0.08	0.07	0.05*	0.0004	14.5	0.005	0.83	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.5	1.4	29*
	29	0.003	0.49	0.52	0.02	0.0015	14.0	0.009	0.55	1.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.6*	1.1*	34
	30	0.005	0.33	0.42	0.03	0.023*	14.1	0.001	0.65	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.6	1.5	26*
	31	0.006	0.23	0.45	0.01	0.0015	20.5*	0.004	0.63	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.9*	1.3	28*
	32	0.008	0.58	0.56	0.04	0.0033	14.1	0.025*	0.90	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5*	0.6*	28*
	33	0.007	0.45	0.31	0.02	0.0023	16.8	0.006	1.3*	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5*	1.1*	24*
	34	0.009	0.55	0.29	0.03	0.0013	16.5	0.017	0.25*	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.6*	1.2*	31
	35	0.007	0.45	0.31	0.02	0.0023	16.8	0.006	0.31	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.4*	1*	32
	36	0.008	0.50	0.50	0.01	0.0016	14.3	0.001	0.66	2.4*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.1*	0.8*	25*
	37	0.009	0.44	0.55	0.03	0.0022	14.5	0.012	0.51	0.4*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.6*	1.2*	32
	38	0.002	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.0007	14.6	0.016	0.33	0.6	3.8*	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.2	1.5*	29*
	39	0.005	0.35	0.55	0.03	0.0011	14.1	0.013	0.41	0.7	0.4*	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.8*	1.3*	33
	40	0.004	0.35	0.25	0.01	0.0025	16.3	0.008	0.56	1.1	-	1.5*	-	-	-	-	-	1.4*	1*	23*
	41	0.006	0.15	0.11	0.02	0.0021	18.6	0.005	0.77	1.9	-	-	1.5*	-	-	-	-	1*	0.8*	24*
	42	0.005	0.23	0.25	0.02	0.0023	14.5	0.015	0.44	1.5	1.2	-	0.02*	-	-	-	-	1.1*	0.9*	33
	43	0.006	0.38	0.45	0.04	0.0009	17.1	0.004	0.93	1.2	-	-	-	0.38*	-	-	-	1.8*	1.3*	28*
	44	0.008	0.22	0.36	0.04	0.0023	16.9	0.0016	0.65	1.1	-	-	-	0.005*	-	-	-	1.7*	1.3*	32
	45	0.003	0.13	0.22	0.01	0.0019	15.4	0.013	0.74	0.7	-	-	-	-	0.16*	-	-	2.1	1.4	29*
	46	0.004	0.11	0.16	0.03	0.0041	14.1	0.004	0.55	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	0.013*	-	3.0	1.5	29*
	47	0.005	0.25	0.25	0.03	0.0035	14.3	0.011	0.45	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	0.0001*	-	1.9	1.3*	33
	48	0.003	0.04	0.1	0.02	0.001	16.1	0.011	0.47	1.7	-	-	-	0.15	0.013	0.0002	0.0021*	1.7*	1.2*	26*

* Outside the scope of the present invention

Table 3

	Steel No.	Hot-rolling conditions			Hot-rolled strip annealing conditions				X-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of finished strip	Mean "r" value of finished strip	Elongation of finished strip, %
		Heating temperature, °C	Finishing temperature, °C	Coiling temperature, °C	Heating temperature, °C	Holding temperature, °C	Holding time, sec	Cooling rate, °C/sec			
Inventive Examples	49	1150	790	490	950	non	-	30	2.0	1.4	35
	50	1090	730	450	950	non	-	40	2.2	1.5	36
	51	1030	650	300	910	non	-	80	2.3	1.6	35
	52	1150	800	450	1080	950	60	40	3.3	1.8	36
	53	1050	780	500	1100	1000	70	30	2.8	1.6	35
	54	1020	630	475	1050	930	60	50	3.0	1.7	36
	55	1150	650	460	950	non	-	35	3.0	1.7	32
	56	1100	660	450	1100	950	100	40	3.0	1.7	32
	57	1140	730	500	980	non	-	40	2.0	1.4	31
	58	1130	750	310	1100	950	120	30	3.1	1.7	33
	59	1150	796	350	1020	non	-	50	2.3	1.5	36
	60	1110	710	500	1100	950	180	60	3.2	1.8	36
	61	1060	630	470	1030	non	-	30	2.7	1.6	35
	62	1050	620	410	1100	940	60	70	3.2	1.8	36
	63	1030	645	360	930	non	-	100	3.1	1.7	35
	64	1150	730	425	1100	990	60	30	2.7	1.6	34
	65	1020	740	430	940	non	-	60	2.0	1.4	32
	66	1030	625	500	1100	930	200	40	3.5	1.9	34
	67	1010	635	486	950	non	-	80	3.3	1.8	34
	68	1030	680	485	1100	980	100	90	2.0	1.7	33
	69	1150	790	490	-	850	21600	50°C/hr	2.0	1.4	35
	70	1150	790	490	-	750	108000	40°C/hr	2.2	1.5	36

Table 4

	Steel No.	Hot-rolling conditions			Hot-rolled strip annealing conditions				X-ray intensity ratio (111)/((100)+(211)) of finished strip	Mean "r" value of finished strip	Elongation of finished strip, %
		Heating temperature, °C	Finishing temperature, °C	Coiling temperature, °C	Heating temperature, °C	Holding temperature, °C	Holding time, sec	Cooling rate, °C/sec			
relative examples	71	1200*	790	490	950	non	-	40	1.1*	1.1*	34
	72	1150	860*	490	1000	non	-	50	1.3*	1.2*	33
	73	1150	790	650*	1100	950	100	60	1.2*	1.2*	35
	74	1130	770	490	1050*	non	-	30	1.1*	1.2*	31
	75	1150	750	490	1000	non	-	15*	1.3*	1.3*	32
	76	1140	790	490	1080	1030*	60	30	1*	1*	31
	77	1050	720	490	1050	850*	130	20*	1.1*	1.2*	30
	78	1150	650	500	870*	non	-	30	0.9*	0.9*	31
	79	1160	690	450	1100	1050*	200	40	1.2*	1.1*	32
	80	1050	800	450	1050*	non	-	80	1.3*	1.2*	31
	81	1100	760	480	1080	1020*	300	40	1.2*	1.1*	30
	82	1060	780	470	1030*	non	-	30	1.2*	1.3*	35
	83	1030	750	440	1050	1010*	120	50	1*	1*	33
	84	1050	800	500	1100*	non	-	35	1.2*	1.1*	34
	85	1140	630	470	1090	1050*	110	20*	1.5*	1.2*	33
	86	1150	760	440	1120*	non	-	40	1.3*	1*	34
	87	1130	770	420	1100	870*	70	30	0.8*	0.9*	32
	88	1100	800	450	770*	non	-	50	0.5*	0.6*	30
	89	1100	630	460	1150	830*	300	20*	0.9*	0.9*	32
	90	1100	700	450	1060*	non	-	40	1.1*	1.1*	33
	91	1100	700	430	1100	750*	160	30	0.6*	0.7*	32
	92	1150	790	490	-	850	1800*	50°C/hr	1.1*	1.1*	34
	93	1150	790	490	-	750	1200*	40°C/hr	1.3*	1.2*	33

* Outside the scope of the present invention

[0070] The following are the findings obtained from Tables 1 and 2. The finished-strips manufactured from the steels of the compositions according to the present invention have higher mean "r" values and better workability than the strips prepared for comparison. Even if chemical composition is within the range of the present invention, preferable x-ray intensity is not obtained and, therefore, the "r" value does not improve if the x-ray intensity ratio is outside the range of the present invention.

[0071] If Si, Mn, P, S, Cu and Ti contents exceed the upper limit thereof, not many precipitates, that affect the x-ray intensity, are formed. Although, therefore, the x-ray intensity and "r" value are within the range according to the invention, elongation drops significantly because of solid solution strengthening and intergranular segregation.

[0072] If C and N contents exceed the upper limit thereof, solid solutions of C and N increase. As a consequence, the desired x-ray intensity is not obtained and elongation drops. Cr, Nb, Mo, Sn and W form intermetallic compounds and segregate at grain boundaries. If, therefore, their contents exceed the upper limit specified by the invention, the desired x-ray intensity and elongation are not obtained because of plentiful precipitation of fine precipitates and solid solution strengthening.

[0073] If Nb and Mo contents fall below the lower limit thereof specified by the invention, sufficient precipitation of the Laves phase and sufficient fixing of C and N are not achieved. As a consequence, the x-ray intensity drops and the desired "r" value is unobtainable. Excessive addition of Mg, though the influence on the x-ray intensity is small, makes the precipitates and oxides too coarse and, therefore, brings about a drop in elongation.

[0074] Tables 3 and 4 show the influences of manufacturing conditions. The finished-strips manufactured by the methods according to this invention have the mean "r" values not lower than 1.4 and the x-ray intensity ratios not lower than 2 that provide excellent workability.

[0075] If manufacturing conditions are outside the range according to the present invention, appropriate precipitates are not formed in the manufacturing process. As a consequence, the preferable x-ray intensity and "r" value are not obtained in cold-rolled annealed steel strip.

[0076] The thicknesses of slabs and hot-rolled strips can be chosen appropriately. The reduction ratio, roll surface roughness, roll diameter, rolling oil, rolling passes, rolling speed and rolling temperature in cold-rolling can also be appropriately chosen.

[0077] Employment of a double rolling method, which applies intermediate annealing midway through cold-rolling further improves the properties of finished steel strip. Intermediate and final annealing can be applied either by bright annealing, which is implemented in non-oxidizing atmosphere such as hydrogen or nitrogen gas, or by annealing in the atmosphere.

[Industrial Applicability]

[0078] The present invention efficiently provides Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel strip having an excellent workability without requiring any new facilities. Accordingly, the present invention is a useful invention that has great industrial applicability.

Claims

1. A Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, and having an x-ray intensity ratio {111}/({100}+{211}) of 2 or greater in the central region of thickness.

2. A Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability according to claim 1 which contains, in mass%, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%.

3. A Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability according to claim 1 or 2, which contains, in mass%, one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100%, and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%.

4. A method for manufacturing Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising of the steps of:

   hot-rolling a steel comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to

1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0% and, as required, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%, and/or, one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100%, and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, with a heating temperature of 1000°C to 1150°C and a finishing temperature of 600°C to 800°C,
coiling the hot-rolled strip at not higher than 500°C,
heating the coiled hot-rolled strip at between 900°C and 1000°C, and
cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec or faster, with subsequent pickling, cooling and annealing.

5. A method for manufacturing Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising of the steps of:

hot-rolling a steel comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0% and, as required, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%, and/or, one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100% and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, with a heating temperature of 1000°C to 1150°C and a finishing temperature of 600°C to 800°C,
coiling the hot-rolled strip at not higher than 500°C,
recrystallizing the coiled hot-rolled strip,
holding the strip at 900°C to 1000°C for not less than 60 seconds, and
cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec or faster, with subsequent pickling, cooling and annealing.

6. A method for manufacturing Cr-bearing heat-resistant steel sheet with excellent workability comprising of the steps of:

hot-rolling a steel comprising, in mass%, C of 0.001% to 0.010%, Si of 0.01% to 0.60%, Mn of 0.05% to 0.60%, P of 0.01% to 0.04%, S of 0.0005% to 0.0100%, Cr of 14% to 19%, N of 0.001% to 0.020%, Nb of 0.3% to 1.0%, Mo of 0.5% to 2.0% and, as required, one or more of Cu of 0.5% to 3.0%, W of 0.01% to 1.0% and Sn of 0.01% to 1.00%, and/or one or more of Ti of 0.01% to 0.20%, Al of 0.005% to 0.100%, Mg of 0.0002% to 0.0100% and B of 0.0003% to 0.001%, with the remainder comprising iron and unavoidable impurities, with a heating temperature of 1000°C to 1150°C and a finishing temperature of 600°C to 800°C,
coiling the hot-rolled strip at not higher than 500°C,
holding the coiled hot-rolled strip at 750°C to 950°C for 1 hour to 30 hours, and
cooling to 300°C at a rate of 30°C/sec or faster, with subsequent pickling, cooling and annealing.

Fig.1

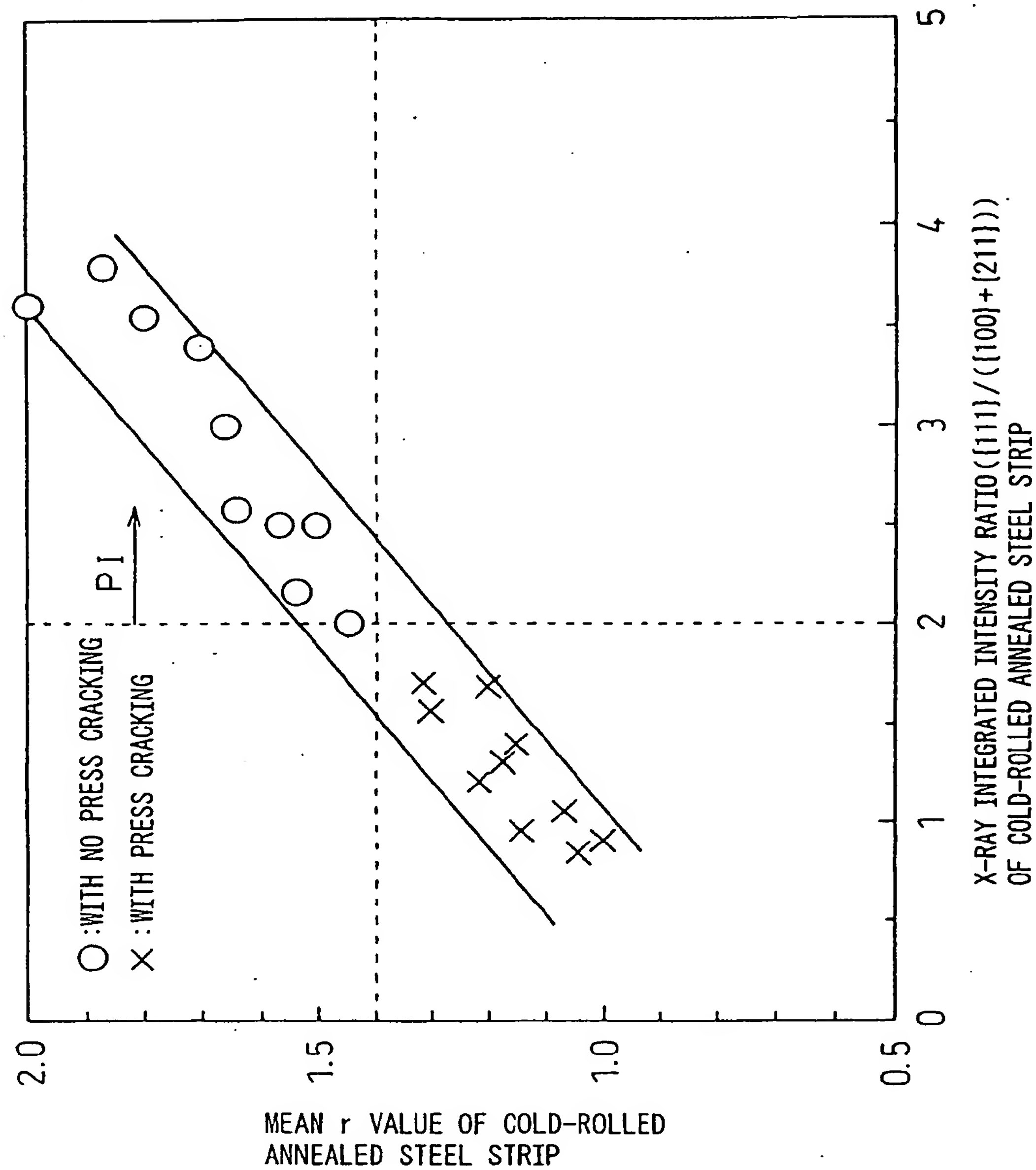
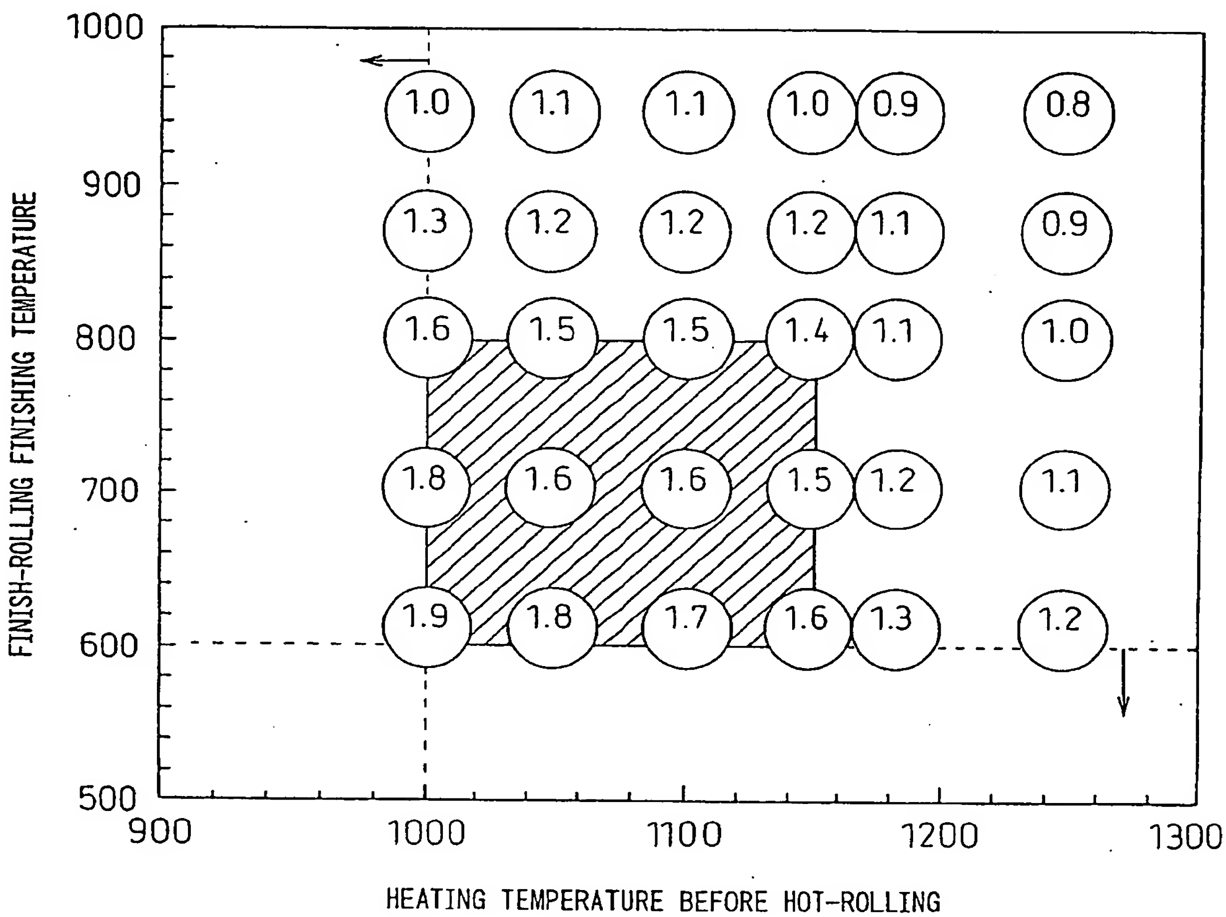

○ :WITH NO PRESS CRACKING
× :WITH PRESS CRACKING
PI
MEAN r VALUE OF COLD-ROLLED ANNEALED STEEL STRIP
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0
1
2
3
4
5
X-RAY INTEGRATED INTENSITY RATIO({111}/({100}+{211}))
OF COLD-ROLLED ANNEALED STEEL STRIP

Fig.2


1000
900
800
700
600
500
FINISH-ROLLING FINISHING TEMPERATURE
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1.1
1.1
1.0
0.9
0.8
1.3
1.2
1.2
1.2
1.1
0.9
1.6
1.5
1.5
1.4
1.1
1.0
1.8
1.6
1.6
1.5
1.2
1.1
1.9
1.8
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1.3
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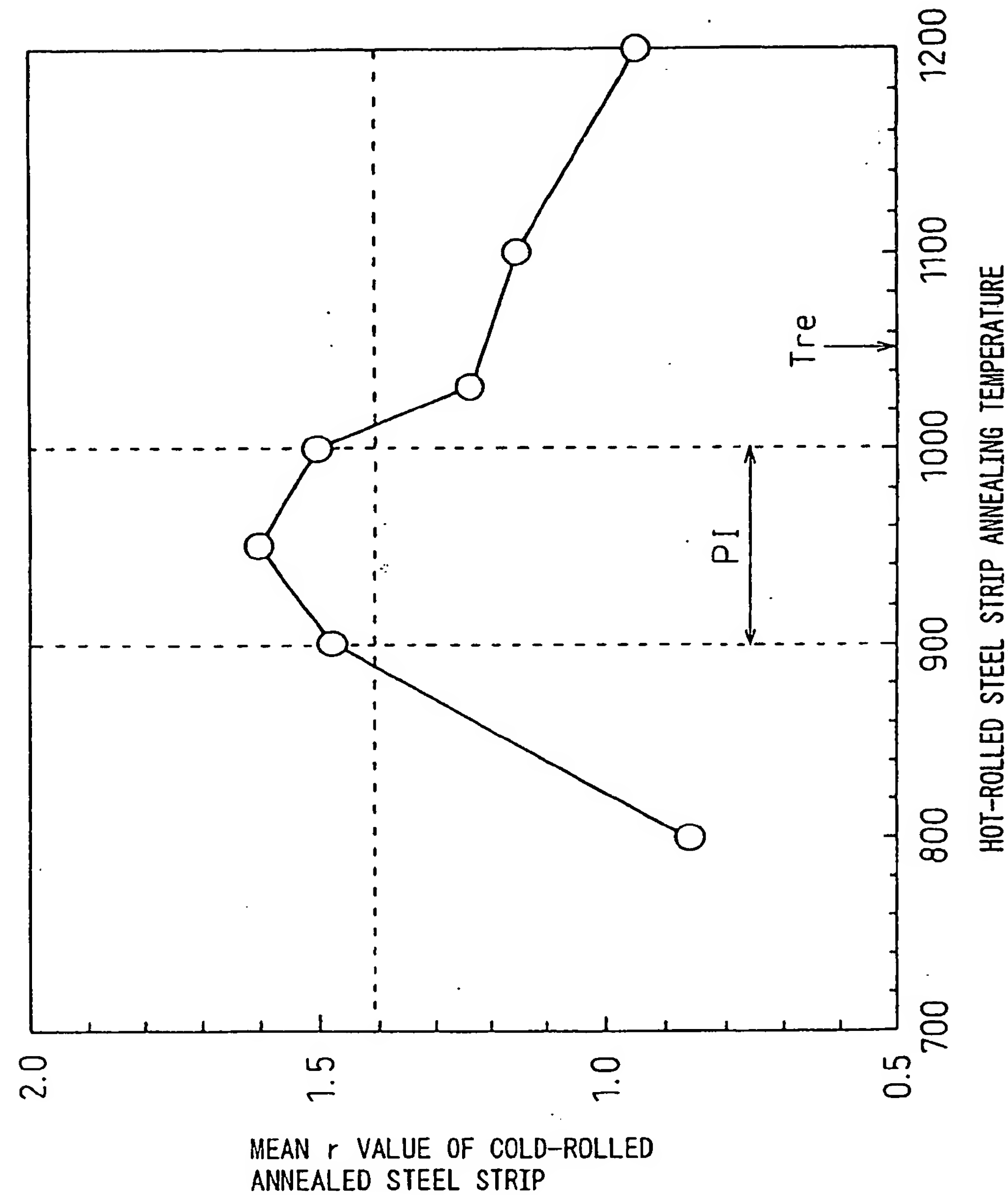
1300
HEATING TEMPERATURE BEFORE HOT-ROLLING

Fig.3


2.0
1.5
1.0
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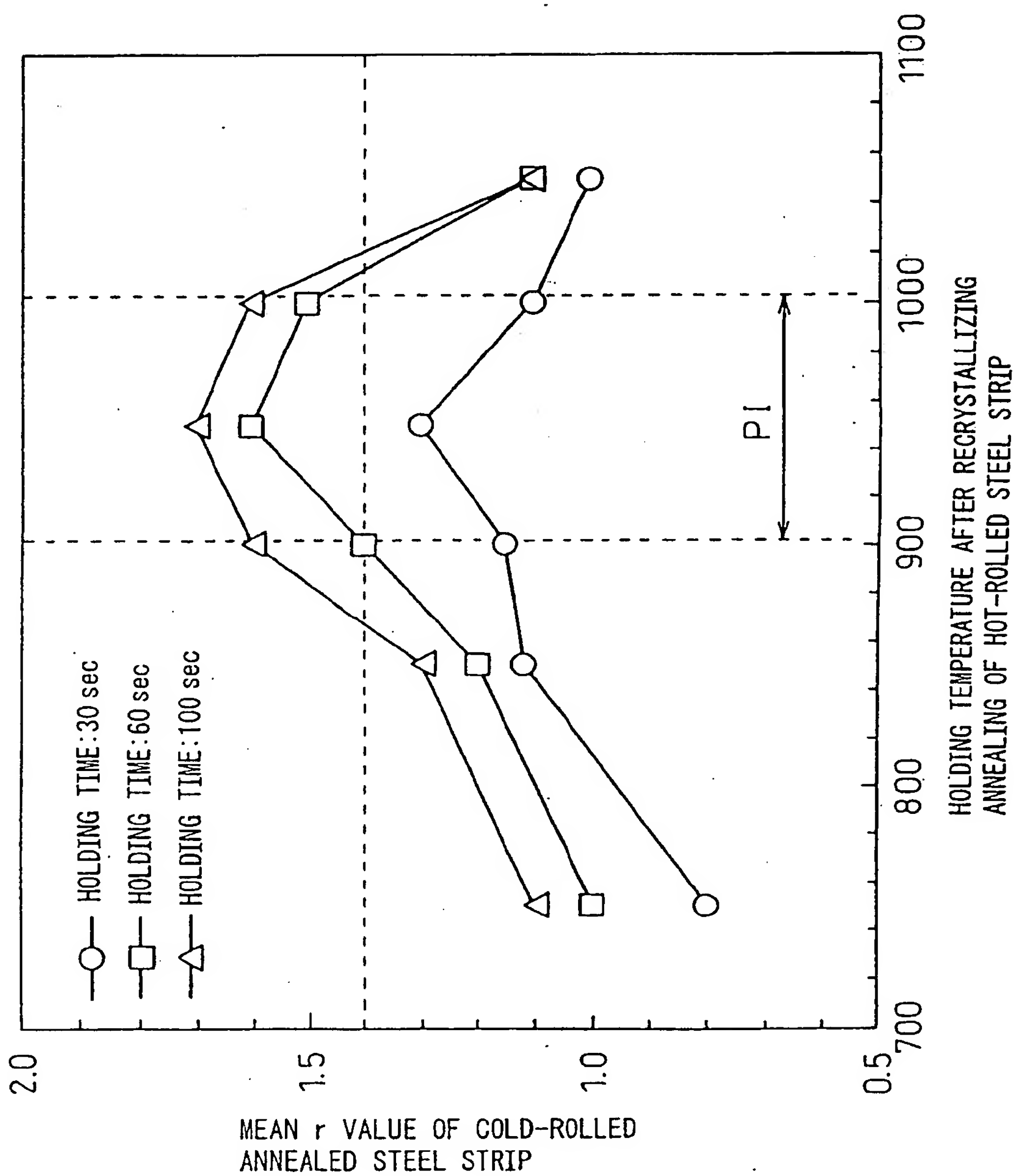
HOT-ROLLED STEEL STRIP ANNEALING TEMPERATURE
MEAN r VALUE OF COLD-ROLLED
ANNEALED STEEL STRIP

Fig. 4


HOLDING TIME: 30 sec
HOLDING TIME: 60 sec
HOLDING TIME: 100 sec
PI
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
700
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1100
HOLDING TEMPERATURE AFTER RECRYSTALLIZING ANNEALING OF HOT-ROLLED STEEL STRIP
MEAN r VALUE OF COLD-ROLLED ANNEALED STEEL STRIP

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/JP03/15988

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
Int.Cl[7] C21D9/46, C22C38/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
Int.Cl[7] C21D8/02-8/04, 9/46-9/48, C22C38/00-38/60

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1922-1996	Toroku Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1994-2004
Kokai Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1971-2004	Jitsuyo Shinan Toroku Koho	1996-2004

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 1207214 A2 (KAWASAKI STEEL CORP.), 22 May, 2002 (22.05.02), Claims & JP 2002-212685 A & KR 2002-37698 A & US 2002-98107 A1	1-6
A	US 4374683 A (SUMITOMO METAL INDUSTRIES LTD.), 22 February, 1983 (22.02.83), Claims & CA 1173729 A & DE 3107490 A & FR 2477180 A & GB 2070644 A & IT 1170765 B & JP 56-123327 A	1-6

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. ☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:
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"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
27 January, 2004 (27.01.04)	10 February, 2004 (10.02.04)

Name and mailing address of the ISA/	Authorized officer
Japanese Patent Office	
Facsimile No.	Telephone No.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/JP03/15988

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 1219719 A1 (NISSHIN STEEL CO., LTD.), 03 July, 2002 (03.07.02), Claims & CN 1363710 A & JP 2002-194507 A & JP 2002-194508 A & KR 2002-52993 A & US 2002-117239 A1	1-6
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A	JP 7-70718 A (Daido Steel Co., Ltd.), 14 March, 1995 (14.03.95), Claims (Family: none)	1-6
A	JP 10-121205 A (KAWASAKI STEEL CORP.), 12 May, 1998 (12.05.98), Claims (Family: none)	1-6
A	JP 53-44420 A (Nippon Steel Corp.), 21 April, 1978 (21.04.78), Claims (Family: none)	1-6

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